

The 10 most important questions to ask your Shaliach before making Aliyah

In the Pesach Hagadah we read about the Four Sons. Each son asks a different question at the Pesach Seder and receives the appropriate answer. Jewish tradition stresses the importance of knowing the correct question to ask, in order to receive the appropriate answer.

Not knowing what exactly to ask is the most common dilemma before making Aliyah. We hope that this guide will assist you in your Aliyah and Klitah planning, by knowing what questions to ask and where to look for the answers.



The information needs of Southern Africans considering Aliyah are varied and unique for each potential Oleh. Telfed, with more than 60 years of counseling Southern African olim, has amassed essential information about all aspects of the Aliyah and Klitah process. Some of this information is recorded on various internet sites, for example:

- ▶ [The Jewish Agency](#)
- ▶ [The Ministry of Absorption](#)
- ▶ [Nefesh B'Nefesh](#)
- ▶ [AACI](#)

The purpose of this "Aliyah Information Check List" is **not** to duplicate the above information sources but to guide you in the questions that you should be asking before making Aliyah. The answers to these questions will hopefully ensure a smooth Aliyah and Klitah process and help to prevent some of the bureaucratic misunderstandings that may occur during your initial absorption period in Israel.

Answers to these very important questions should only be sought from the most reliable sources. These are:

- a. Your local Aliyah Shaliach;
- b. The Jewish Agency Global Center (toll free from South Africa 0-800-996-886 or via their [web site](#)).
- c. The recognized official web sites listed above and below.

All information on this Check List is subject to change.



*The information below is worded in the singular (male), but each question should be asked by **every** member of a family unit planning Aliyah.*

PRE-ALIYAH

1. The Law of Return

Question to ask: Am I eligible to make Aliyah according to the Law of Return?
For more information please see [here](#).

2. Status when making Aliyah:



Some of the questions to ask your Shaliach:

1. What will my status be when I make Aliyah?
2. If I have never lived in Israel before, when I make Aliyah will I receive Oleh (new immigrant) status?
3. If one of my parents is Israeli, will I receive Ezech Oleh (immigrant citizen) status when I make Aliyah?
4. If I was born in Israel or made Aliyah as a child and then came to South Africa before age 14, since I already have an Israeli ID number, will I receive Katin Chozer (returning minor) status when I make Aliyah, now that I am over the age of 17?
5. If I have lived in Israel in the past and have an Israeli ID number, when I now make Aliyah am I an Oleh with rights remaining (Oleh Gorer Zaka'ut) or a Returning Resident (Toshav Chozer)?
6. If I lived in Israel in the past, received an Israeli ID number, yet renounced my Israeli citizenship, am I now recognised as an Oleh Be'Sheinit (immigrant for the second time) when making Aliyah?
7. The final question to ask: "What else do I need to know about my Aliyah status?"

The [Ministry of Absorption site here](#) lists the different Oleh categories. It is recommended that you carefully examine this information as it is vital to know what you and/or your children's status is **before** you make aliyah.

3. What is the process that I go through in order to make Aliyah?



1. **Question:** Where do I go in order to apply to make Aliyah?

Answers: |

- a. Telfed recommends that you contact your local Aliyah Shaliach and make an appointment to see him/her. A one-on-one interview is so important when making Aliyah. The Aliyah Shaliach will listen to your needs and advise you accordingly.
- b. If there is no Aliyah Shaliach close to your home, you can utilise the Aliyah services of the Jewish Agency Global Israel Center. They can be phoned toll free, or contacted via their website, as per above.
- c. If you are already in Israel and want to make Aliyah while still in Israel, please contact the Telfed Klitah Counselor on 09-790-7800 or via email: susan@telfed.org.il. The Telfed Klitah Counselor will guide you through the steps needed in order to easily apply for Aliyah whilst in Israel.

4. What documents should I bring with when I go to my meeting with the Aliyah Shaliach?

Answer:

We suggest that you apply for the following documents as soon as possible. You do not need to have them for your initial meeting with the Shaliach, but they are essential in order to receive Aliyah approval. If you are able to obtain the following documents before your first meeting with the Shaliach, it will ensure a smoother Aliyah application process:



- a. **Unabridged birth certificate** – this is not the birth certificate that your parents received at the hospital immediately after your birth. An unabridged birth certificate needs to be applied for, from the South African Ministry of Home Affairs. It has both your mother and father's names on it and proves that you are their child. Please be aware that after applying for an unabridged birth certificate from Home Affairs, there might be a waiting period of a few months before receiving the certificate.



- b. **Proof of Jewishness** – although a letter from the Rabbi of your local congregation is recognised as a “Proof of Jewishness” by Misrad Ha’Pnim (Israeli Ministry of Interior/Home Affairs), we recommend that you apply for a Proof of Jewishness from your local Beth Din instead. This is easily recognised by the Ministry of Interior and will make your Aliyah application process much smoother.

- c. **Unabridged civil marriage or divorce certificate.** (Although it is important to bring your Ketuba or Get to Israel when you make Aliyah, these are religious documents and are therefore not part of the Aliyah application process).

- d. **Death certificate** from the South African Ministry of Home Affairs, if your spouse has sadly passed away.

- e. **Passport/s** that show all your entries and exits to/from Israel during the previous 7 years. (If you are a Katin Chozer – see Question 2 (d) above- then you will need to bring your passport/s that date back to when you were 14 years old. If this is impossible, please discuss alternative ways to prove your entries and exits to/from Israel, with your Shaliach).

4a. Must the documents that I bring to the Shaliach be authenticated?

Answer: Apart of the Proof of Jewishness, the other three documents mentioned above (#1, 3 & 4) do need to be authenticated. This is done by having an “apostil” stamp placed upon them.

4b. What is an apostil stamp and where do I obtain it?

Answer:

An apostil stamp is an internationally recognised red seal, which authenticates official documents. It is only provided by the High Court of South Africa. If you are unable to

personally travel to the High Court in your city, there are a number of local South African lawyers that will arrange an apostil stamp for your documents. These lawyers charge a fee. They can be contacted via your local Aliyah office.

5. Klitah (absorption) planning before making Aliyah:

Some of the questions to ask your Shaliach:

Question No. 1 - Initial absorption

- ▶ I don't have an initial absorption plan yet. What absorption plan would you suggest for me? I have heard of the following options and would like some more information about them please:
- ▶ I am between the ages of 18 to 28, I'm single or married without children, would Kibbutz Ulpan be the initial Klitah programme that you would recommend?
For more information please see:
<http://www.jewishagency.org/JewishAgency/English/Aliyah/Absorption+Options/Kibbutz+Programs/Kibbutz+Ulpan/>
- ▶ I am single, with an academic degree and I am between the ages of 22 to 35, would Ulpan Etzion in Jerusalem or Haifa be the initial Klitah programme that you would recommend?

For more information please see: [Jerusalem](#) [Haifa](#)

- ▶ I am single, between the ages of 29 to 45 or married (with or without children) between the ages of 25 to 50, and I'm looking for an absorption programme within a Kibbutz framework. Would you recommend the Bayit Rishon Ba'Moledet (First Home in the Homeland) programme?
- ▶ I am single, between the ages of 29 to 45 or married (with or without children) between the ages of 25 to 50, and I am interested in learning Hebrew and working in the hotel industry in Eilat. . Would you recommend the Bayit Rishon Ba'Moledet (First Home in the Homeland) hotel programme?



[Click here](#) for more information.

- ▶ I am single or married (with or without children) and I am interested in learning Hebrew and working in the hotel industry in Eilat. Would you recommend the Isrotel Hotel Employment programme?

[Click here](#) for more information.

- ▶ I am single, between the ages 18 to 55 or married (with or without children) between the ages 18 to 55 and would like an urban absorption programme. Would you recommend a Merkaz Klitah (Absorption Centre) in Ashdod, Be'er Sheva, Karmiel or Ra'anana?

[Click here](#) for more information.

- ▶ I am married (with or without children) between the ages 18-55 and would like to start my absorption in the cities of Ariel, Haifa, Jerusalem, Ma'aleh Adumim or Modi'in. Would you recommend the Community Absorption programme "Aliyah 2010"?

[Click here](#) for more information.

- ▶ I am single or married (with or without children) and none of the above absorption programmes appeal to me. Do you recommend "Direct Absorption" in the location of my choice? If yes, where will I study Hebrew?

[Click here](#) for more information about Direct Absorption

[Click here](#) for more information about studying Hebrew at a city Ulpan.

Question No. 2 - Finance

- ▶ I want to prepare myself financially before my Aliyah. How will I financially support myself (and my family) during the initial Klitah period? I have heard that there are a number of financial benefits available to new Olim. What are they?



- ▶ Sal Klitah (absorption basket): What funds are provided by Sal Klitah during my first 7 months in Israel?

[Click here](#) for more information.

- ▶ Is the Sal Klitah enough to live on during this period?

[Please see a comparison](#) of living costs between Johannesburg and Tel Aviv:

- ▶ 2. I heard about a 10 year capital gains tax exemption for new Olim...

[Click here](#) for more information

Question No.3 - Medical cover



In South Africa I had a private “medical aid” and a “hospital plan”. What medical cover will I receive in Israel and how much will it cost per month?

For more information please see [here](#) and [here](#).

Question No.4 - Banking

- ▶ As I hope to receive financial benefits as an Oleh once I make Aliyah, can I open an Israeli bank account before I leave South Africa?
- ▶ If I already have a tourist bank account in Israel, should I change this tourist account into an Israeli account?

Answer:

- ▶ Oleh financial benefits are only transferred to Israeli bank accounts registered in the names of Israeli citizens. You must therefore wait until making Aliyah before you can open such an account.
- ▶ You can change your tourist bank account into an Israeli bank account, but only once you have made Aliyah and have become an Israeli citizen.

For more information please see [here](#) and [here](#).

Question No.5 - Visas

Do I need a special visa in my passport in order to make Aliyah? If yes, where do I get this visa from?

For more information please see [here](#).

Question No.6 - The Israeli Educational System

We are making Aliyah with school age children. How is the Israeli school system different from the South African one?

For more information please see [here](#).



How do I register my children for school in Israel?

For more information please see [here](#).

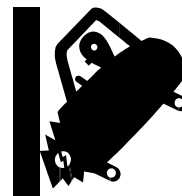
Is there a programme for grade 10 children to study in a boarding school and achieve an Israeli Matriculation certificate (Bagrut), before their parents make Aliyah?

For more information about the Na'aleh programme, please see [here](#).

Question No.7 - Driving License

I have a valid South African driver's license. Am I able to drive with it in Israel? If yes, for how long? What is required in order for me to obtain an Israeli Driving License.

For more information please see [here](#).



Question No. 8 - University and Mechina Studies

I have a Southern African matriculation certificate with a university pass. I am considering studying at a university in Israel. How do I register for studies and what benefits are there for new Olim students? Do I need to study at a Mechina or TAKA (pre-academic programmes) before starting my first degree?

For more information please see [here](#) and [here](#).

I already have a first degree and would like to study towards a Masters degree in Israel. How do I register for studies and what benefits are there for new Olim students?

For more information please see [here](#) and [here](#).

Question No. 9 - Army Service

I am over the age of 18. Do I have to do military service in Israel? If yes, for how long?

For more information please see [here](#).

Is it possible to join the army together with a group of other new Olim within a Kibbutz programme?

For more information about Garin Tzabar please see [here](#) and [here](#):

Question No. 10 - Employment

How can I prepare myself for the Israeli employment market before I make Aliyah?

For more information please see [here](#).





We trust that the above information will assist you clarify the questions you have while planning your Aliyah.

For more information please see:

www.telfed.org.il or www.facebook.com/telfed

or call toll free from South Africa: 0800-997-495

Good luck with your research and if we can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Behatzlacha!

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